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AUTHOR Israeli, Eitan
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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the current state of lifelong education in Israel in the light of the Jewish concept of lifelong education. After presenting six basic elements of Judaism, the paper raises the question of whether there exists a continuity from the Jewish conception of lifelong education to its actual shape in modern Israel. An analysis is made of the adult/lifelong education provided by the Kibbutz and Moshav movements, the Israel Defence Forces, and women's voluntary organizations. A discussion of the contradictory faces of the Israeli person reveals some of the inconsistencies in the planning and provision of adult/lifelong education. The last section of the paper deals with three dilemmas: first, the rather unauthentic meaning of the concept of lifelong education in Israel today; second, the issue of the Text and the Rabbi; and third, the limits of change. (KC)

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Eitan Israeli

Lifelong Education in Israel: Continuity and Dilemmas

Zusammenfassung – Summary – Résumé

Die Darstellung untersucht die gegenwärtige Verfassung der „life-long-education" in Israel auf dem Hintergrund des jüdischen Verständnisses von lebenslanger Erziehung. Nach der Darlegung von sechs Elementen der jüdischen Glaubenstradition legt der Aufsatz die Frage vor, ob eine Kontinuität von jüdischer Konzeption hin zum gegenwärtigen Befund von lebenslanger Erziehung im Staate Israel besteht. Die Beanwortung dieser Frage wird an drei typischen Beispielen versucht: Erwachsenenbildung an der Kibbutz- und Moshav-Bewegung, den israelischen Streitkräften und der Frauenvereine. Sodann wird zu widersprüchlichen Erscheinungsbildern des gegenwärtigen Israel vorangeschritten, um solchermaßen die teilweise gegenläufigen Strömungen in der israelischen Erwachsenenbildung verstehbar zu machen. Der letzte Abschnitt behandelt drei Aspekte, die der Kontinuitätskonzeption entgegenstehen: einmal ist die historische Dimension der lebenslangen Bildung vielfach nicht bewußt, sodann fehlen maßgebliche „Texte" und Modelle darstellende Lehrer (Rabbi) und schließlich sind die Veränderungsmöglichkeiten begrenzt.

The paper examines the current state of life-long education in Israel in the light of the Jewish concept of life-long education. After having presented six basic elements of Judaism, the author raises the question whether there exists a continuity from the Jewish conception of life-long education to its actual shape in modern Israel. He illustrates his examination by analysing adult/life-long education provided by the Kibbutz and Moshav mouvements, the Israel Defence Forces and by women's voluntary organizations. He then moves on

to the discussion of the contradictory faces of the Israeli person in order to reveal some of the inconsistencies in the planning and provision of adult/life-long education. The last section of the paper deals with three dilemmas: first, the rather unauthentic meaning of the concept of life-long education in Israel today; second, the issue of the Text and the Rabbi; third, the limits of change.

L' exposé examine la situation actuelle de „life-long education" en Israël basée sur la conception juive de l' éducation permanente. Aprés avoir présenté six éléments importants du judaïsme, l'auteur discute la question si on peut constater une continuité de la conception juive de l'éducation permanente à la situation actuelle en Israël. Pour illustrer cette question, l'auteur donne trois exemples caractéristiques: l'éducation des adultes effectuée par les mouvements Kibboutz et Moshav, les forces armées israéliennes ainsi que par les associations féminines. Puis il avance à la discussion de phénomènes contradictiores en Israël pour faire comprendre ainsi quelques incohérences dans l'éducation des adultes en Israël. Dans la dernière partie de l'exposé il est question de trois aspects apposés à la théorie d'une continuité dans l'éducation permanente: tout d'abord, on n'est pas conscient de la dimension historique de l'éducation permanente, puis il manque les textes et les enseignants compétents (les rabbins) et finalement, les possibilités d'une modification sont fortement limités.

A working Framework

The concept of lifelong education is well established in Judaism (Goldman, 1975). It encompasses the vital components of what even today is conceived to be Lifelong Education:

(a) Cross-generational pursuit of learning. This implies two facets: first, each generation of Jews should take upon itself the ‚commandment of learning' with direct, rather than vicarious, experience. Second, each generation will pass on to the next one its own understanding of the Holy Scriptures; at the same time, it will allow the next generation to develop its interpretation, as legitimately as did the early fathers.

(b) Conceiving of childhood and adolescence as prepartatory stages for adulthood, in terms of conscious effort to use learning as a major instrument for coping with life demands, roles and situations. Judaism places more importance on the adult phase of life (starting at the age of 13 with the Bar Mitzvah, the boy's rite of passage, and gaining full momentum at the age of 18, when men and women are expected to get married and take their place in the community). The pre-adulthood phases are dedicated to profound study of the Jewish way of life, including the growing internalization of the guiding values.

(c) An interplay between the formal system and the nonformal system in education. Actually, for generations, this distinction did not exist and most of Jewish learning was administered in communal institutions, which were financed by both communal and private funds and were supervised by communal Boards. Learning, then, was „formal" in the sense of being compulsory; it was „non-formal" in the sense of certificates. From the mid-19th century onwards, the „yeshiva" became more formalized as the upper stage of Jewish learning. The interplay between the yeshiva (the high school and post-high school) and the „beit midrash" (that is, the synagogue which served both for prayers and for learning), was frequently manifested when the learners in the yeshiva went in the evenings to the „beit midrash" in order to study simpler texts with the common people.

(d) Using individual, familial, and communal resources in order to impart knowledge and to create learning environments for all. The Jewish tradition of learning was that almost each person could study and teach. Although the „beit midrash" was the focal arena for learning, other places could serve as well, including private homes. The „joy of learning" served in good and bad times, as a major instrument for compensation; each occasion and each place were appropriate.

(e) Women, though not officially included in any of the formal or non-formal types of Jewish education, were informally instructed in their homes. Mothers were charged with the direct responsibility of educating their daughters not only in the actual behavior at home, but more importantly, in the understanding of the core of the Holy Sriptures. Judaism is passed matrilineally.

(f) The Holy Scriptures were always the major content-area for study; the rabbis – the main teachers. Still, the Scriptures and the rabbis were not the only channels for Jewish life. Values were not only taught, but also exhibited in actual behavior. Rabbis were conceived of as teachers, not as models, for Jewish living; thus „simple Jews" (those less scholary than rabbis) served as leaders and „models" for their communities. As much as knowledge was important; and as much as intellectual abilities were favored – the combination of knowledge coupled with the living of „a Jewish life" was preferred. „Lifelong education contained both elements of intellectual learning and application of learning in actual living.[1]

These six components of lifelong education can be summarized and interrelated as follows: It is a religious commandment to study throughout life, each person learning and teaching, using his learning to fulfill the Jewish way of life which is based not only on the Holy Scriptures and their commentaries,

[1] Goldman's 1975 book seems to us to be the most appropriate resource for our discussion in terms of its recency and its well-documented historical dimension. Other resources are: Aronson (1964); Neusner (1976).

but also on the emulation of „model persons" whose values are demonstrated in actual behavior. This summary will serve us as a working framework for the discussion of lifelong education in the State of Israel. We will attempt to show in what ways, and to what extent, the current situation in Israel is a continuity of adult Jewish education in the Diaspora. We will also pose some dilemmas, based on the rapid change in circumstances in Israeli society.

„The Holy Covenant" VS. The social Contract

The form of Judaism which flourished in the Diaspora has undergone major changes in Israel. The „Holy Covenant" between God and the people of Israel has been, for the majority secular population, replaced by „social contracts" offered by different establishments in Israel. For example, both the Kibbutz and the Moshav Movements which started some 40 and 30 years before the State was established, proposed an ideological framework, as well as a social contract, for the settlers who came from Jewish milieus. The frame work was the Zionist Idea which strived for revolution in the Jewish way of life in Israel. The social contract was between the emerging settling institutions and the newly arrived immigrants, to live in cooperative communities and to conduct a productive, rural, and communal life. These Movements developed their own conception of lifelong education, which did away with the Holy Scriptures. They adopted the idea that each person, man and woman, can learn and should learn. They developed their own „rabbis", that is, great teachers of adults; and believed not in learning for its own sake, but in learning which is applied and is manifested in actual behavior. This conception brought about the term: „working and learning society".[2]

Another example was the IDF (Israel Defence Force), whose social contract, since its establishment in 1948, was to carry out national goals, as decided upon by the Government. Since 1949, the IDF has been involved not only in military operations but also in social campaigns. Various corps within the IDF were directly charged with the responsibility of helping out in civic projects, such as the NACHAL which sent soldiers to establish agricultural keypoints in border areas. The GADNA (Youth Troops) has been training its soldiers to work as youth counsellors in development towns, in inner city neigborhoods and in problematic moshavim. The Central Education Department of the IDF has been involved in numerous efforts in the civic arena, using its trained personnel and recruiting its Reserve people to join forces in assisting

[2] A highly recommended resource which concentrates on this subject is Schachar's Book (1976).

in nationwide, as well as, local programs. In actuality, each of the IDF corps, including those engaged in front-line combat, found themselves contributing to non-military goals. This was possible because of the underlying philosophy of the IDF regarding lifelong education. The elements of this philosophy demonstrated a great similarity to those of the traditional Jewish philosophy of lifelong education. In the process of „training soldiers for positive service in the IDF, based on interest in, and identification with, their military roles;" the IDF provided: (a) full basic education, for those who needed it; (b) full high school education for career-soldiers; (c) improvement of Hebrew language skills; (d) counselling services for about-to-be-released soldiers in the areas of vocational training, academic pursuits, entrance into the job-market. A salient content-area, throughout the military service was the emphasis on Jewish values and identification, good citizenship, and the personal connection to the Land. (Metzer, 1983)

Despite the similarity, lifelong education in the IDF did not emanate from the Hole Covenant, but rather from the „social contract" between the individual soldier and the IDF. Upon recruitment, each soldier made his personal vow to both the IDF and the State of Israel. This individual committment highlighted the secular framework of life-long education in the IDF, as contrasted with the religious framework of traditional Judaism. Strangely enough, the original Holy Covenant was made between Abraham as an individual, and God; although in practice, it was made between a Nation, a People, and God. Lifelong education in traditional Judaism, was meant to be individual and communal at the same time. A man's scholarship and excellence were worth little if they were not shared with other people; the validity of knowledge was tested out against the background of community or group. In the IDF, the social contract allowed for individuals to move up the hierarchy ladder as a result of the continuous education provided within, or financed by, the IDF. Soldiers, both male and female, of all ranks, were accountable, throughout their education within the army, to their secular superiors; the whole system belonging to the State, and being financed by the State. Thus, lifelong education in the IDF was considered to be a link in the chain of the growth and development of the Israeli Person.

We will return to this concept of the Israeli person in later discussion.

The third example, of a type of social contract which replaced the Holy Covenant, was Women's Voluntary Organizations. Three major organizations emerged, affiliated with major political parties in Israel. NA' AMAT, the Labour Party's, as well as the Histadrut's (General Trade Union) Women's Arm, was the largest in its membership and in operations. WIZO, initially a Women's Arm of the General Zionist's Party (which changed to become the Liberal Party) was second in size to NA' AMAT, but better dispersed and more influential in the Jewish Diaspora. EMUNAH, the smallest, yet cohesive and

powerful, was the Women's Arm of the National Religious Party. Although the first two women's organisations were secular while the third was religious, there were several common denominators being shared by the three organizations. Their ideology was to encourage women toward personal growth and to equip them with adequate coping skills in their roles of single women, wives, mothers, sisters, grandmothers, widows, single parents. Their modes of reaching out to women were, basically, similar; so were the formats of learning that they offered in their Clubs, Chapters, Circles. The organizations were structured in a rather formal hierarchical manner: headquarters, divisions, departments, regional offices, local chapters or clubs, study circles, and course. They enlisted their members by similar techniques, suggesting social „contracts" of similar nature. They regarded lifelong education to be a major tool in implementing their ideologies, and implied that better education equals good citizenship equals the right choice in the ballot box. It should be said, that the political nuance was tacit and that voting for the „right party" was, in no way, the raison d'etre of these women's organizations. The indirect gain was the emergence of women, regardless of their partisan affiliation, in political posts. The three women's organizations were proud to point a women, who had risen up through their ranks to national, as well as regional and local influential positions within the State.

In this example of Israeli Establishment, lifelong education concentrated on a distinct client group – women. The three women's organizations developed a common body of knowledge and skills, to be imparted to women of all ages, socio-economic groups and countries of origin. They hardly developed their own „rabbis", rather recruited experts from within and from outside to teach and train women in skills pertaining to home management, communication, family roles, community cooperation, etc. Their creed was that each woman can learn and develop in her own way, throughout her life span. In laying the firm foundations of voluntarism among women, and for women, these women's organizations came closer to the Jewish tradition of lifelong education. Regardless of the extent of their religiosity, NA' AMAT, WIZO, and EMUNAH felt themselves responsible for the education of their fellow sisters. At the same time, it was not a „Holy Covenant" from which they derived their legitimacy. Rather, a social contract among women, who were assertive in their intentions to liberate themselves from generation-long discrimination at home and in public. In this sence, lifelong education served probably as the best vehicle for growth. Whoever made use of the opportunities, benefitted as an individual and often gained the acclaim of other women. With the absence of the „Holy Scriptures", the emphasis was on process.[3]

[3] The comparative analysis of the three major women's oragnizations has, partially, been done by this writer's students and has not been published. Most of the references were in Hebrew, including the „manifestos" of each of the women's organizations.

We have found some common characteristics of the social contracts, offered by various establishments in Israel, in which they relate to lifelong education. First, concentration on weak groups, men or women, from different ethnic origin, in urban and rural settings – in order to fill in the gaps of literacy and to strengthen the daily life coping skills. Second, focusing on the promotion and recruitment of individual learners, rather than on groups or communities. This focus on the individual inter-relates with the third characteristic: striving for post-secondary equivalency courses, as a matter of prestige for both the providing agencies and the potential learners. Fourth, Judaism as a content-area is rarely presented. The alternative content-area is the intricacies of the Israeli society or, the Israeli Person.

The contradictory faces of the Israeli Person

The Israeli Person implies for us, the Israeli society, since the establishment of the State. Thirty-seven years of nationhood encompass more than one generation; in the Israeli society's history it entails several generations. One generation was the founding society of the State (Yishuv) which numbered 600,000 people in 1948. Five years later, this society was flooded by the same number of people coming from Oriental societies. 1967, the Six Day War, could mark the beginning of another generation, territorial expansion and spiritual vanity. Seven years later, the Yom Kippur war punctured the sense of false security and re-opened the wounds of loss and pain. A decade later, the War in Lebanon deepened alienation and diversity in the Israeli society. Thirty-seven years, five official wars, numerous confrontations, continuous losses, pendulum swings of security and insecurity, immigration and emigration – all these are only the surface of the cauldron of strife, which was constantly molding the Israeli society and the Israeli Person.

The conceptualization and practice of lifelong education were indicative of the evolving crucial events in Israel.[4] National goals have always directed the course upon which lifelong education was set. The major providing agencies felt obliged to correspond to the goals which were oftime ennunciated

[4] The best available study in English, is James D. Cunningham's dissertation (1982): National Identiy – National Unity, The integrational Aspect in the Development of the Modern State of Israel 1948–1973. In this dissertation, „fifteen primary factors were identified that connect modern Israeli identity to a traditional Jewish identity . . . A substantive theory was developed to explain the integrational aspect of adult education among the Jewisch citizens of Israel. It states that the closer one moves towards an integration of Jewish identity with Israeli identity, the stronger one's sense of national identiy-national unity will be with the State of Israel. The study shows that the goal and direction of adult education in Israel (1948–1973) was towards national identity-national unity.

by persons holding public office. An analysis of the map of adult education agencies in Israel will show that the majority of them are heavily influenced by major political parties and their affiliates. An attempt to draw such a map was made by Schachar (1976) and it included the following eight categories:[5]

1. Governmantal and national agencies. Examples:
   (a) the department of adult education within the Ministry of Education and Culture; its counterpart department of Torah education. Also, the department of in-service training for teachers, principals, and counsellors.
   (b) the Extension Service within the Ministry of Agriculture.
   (c) the Training College for educational-social workers, within the Ministry of Labour and Welfare.
   (d) the Mt. Carmel International Training Centre for Community Services, within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. Urban and rural municipal institutions. Exampels:
   (a) departments of adult education and culture in cities and in local councils.
   (b) community centres in distressed communities.
   (c) regional and community colleges.
3. Kibbutz and moshav movements' arms of adult education and culture.
4. The Histadrut (General Trade Union) and other major parties' worker's associations – all having their arms in adult education and culture.
5. Post-secondary institutions. Examples:
   (a) extension divisions within each university and college.
   (b) the Martin Buber Centre at the Hebrew University.
   (c) the Open University.
6. Societies and institutions which provide specific adult education. Examples:
   (a) the Society for the Study of the Bible.
   (b) the Society for Nature Protection.
   (c) museums.
7. Voluntary institutions and organizations which include adult education in their programs. Examples:
   (a) women's organizations.
   (b) newcomer's associations.

[5] Schachar's rationale for this classification was: „In Israel, it doesn't make much difference whether the institution sees adult education as its primary or secondary role. The majority of adult education agencies in Israel are interwoven in larger institutional contexts and they are supposed to serve the general goals of those institutions. Our major classificatory criterion will be the distinction between agencies which have, or have not, personnel and specially allot resources for adult education programs". (Schachar, 1976, p. 204).

8. Private institutions. Examples:
   (a) Alfred Adler Institute.
   (b) NORA (Women's personal growth).

As we said, the analysis of this map shows that at least 4–5 categories of adult education agencies are directly quided by political forces. Governmental ministries, as well as regional and local councils, shape their policies in lifelong education – subject to political ideologies which are promulgated in a highly concentrated fashion once every four years during election season. Budgets are allocated on the basis of political considerations, both nationwide and local. In addition, the Settling Movements (moshav and kibbutz), worker's associations; women's organizations and newcomer's associations – are indirectly influenced by their parent-parties. The remaining categories of adult education agencies provide a broad range of programs and activities for different client groups, which makes up for the highly centralized and less diversified programs offered by the aforementioned agencies.

To our understanding, the real problem which gives rise to the „contradictory faces of the Israeli Person" is the contradictory logics of th · national goals. We will illustrate this proposition, using a survey done in 1975–76 (Israeli, 1976). 35 adult education agencies and 70 programs were surveyed in the northern part of Israel. Each agency responded, in its own phrasing, to the question of national goals. The following five goals were found to be the most common:

A. Linking between different social groups, different generations, between Jews and Arabs. Social integration and absorption.
B. Familiarity with the Land, with Jewish history and folklore, Education for Zionism, Knowledge of citizen's rights and responsibilities.
C. Contructive outlets for tension release.
D. Development and advancement of Israeli citizens, socially and workwise; women's development.
E. Learning the Arabic language.

The first national goal called for a conscious effort, on the part of lifelong educators, to overcome the gaps existing in Israeli society. This logic was in contrast with the other logic of allowing different social groups to keep their own indigenous patterns. The „melting pot" approach, which prevailed in Israel in the 50's and early 60's, was later judged to be a wrong policy for Israel. The „crash campaign", typical of natinal goals in the first decade and a half of the existence of the State, were found to be more harmful than positive in building a nation. There was no way to create an artificial composite Israeli Person, at the expense of disqualifying the heritage and folklore of persons

who came from a hundred different countries. In effect, the polarity within the Israeli society increased, in issues such as: women's status, religiosity, settlements in the administered territories, legitimacy and equality among ethnic groups. On this background, the national goal of social integration and absorption, and linking up with Arabs and other minorities, posed a contradiction between the desired and the possible. Several prominent lifelong educators dedicated long years of efforts to implement this national goal. At the same time, others found it to be a mission impossible in practice, while believing in its pressing need. National identity became less clear, national unity became harder to reach. Lifelong education agencies were confused as to their list of priorities and to the allocation of resources.

Another contradiction rose from the third national goal, previously mentioned. Finding „constructive outlets for tension release" was regarded to be a high priority before and after the Yom Kippur War. Volunteer organizations, regional and local councils, the private sector and others, concentrated on programs which taught persons how to cope which the tensions of daily life. Psychological study circles, group dynamics, parent education, community self-help groups were formed in an intense manner, throughout the country. After the war in 1973, the subject of bereavement came into the fore and lifelong education agencies began to treat the subject as a national priority. Less than ten years later, prior to the War in Lebanon, and during the war, this national goal of constructive outlet was pushed aside and became quite low on the list. A sizeable amont of the national budget went to the War in Lebandon; there were severe cuts in the financing of lifelong education activities. Each agency had to bitterly fight over the limited funds, and the „constructive outlets" national goal did not pass the test of budget. Worker's associations, government ministries, local councils, and others re-arranged their agendas. Another contradiction became visible, that is, between the emphasis on caring for individual and familial needs, on one hand, and channeling of national funds to an action which caused heightened divisiveness. Two different logics clashed; the outcome being contradictory faces of the Israeli Person.

Despite these contradictions, Israel can be described as a country which consciously strive for national unity and works hard towards achieving this goal. This ambition is deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition, and seemingly it draws a line of continuity from the Jewish Diaspora to the State of Israel. In actuality, this continuity faces increasing difficulties, and the pursuit of nationhood still has a long way to go. The present-day Israeli Person cannot follow his predecessors' images and models, not only because he lives in the era of modernity, but also, and more importantly, because his spiritual and social foundations need clarification. Lifelong education reflects these weaknesses, in its conceptual thinking and in its uncertainty about actual achievements and future directions.

Some Dilemmas

The Concept of Lifelong Education

All the documentation dealing with lifelong education in Judaism points to the clarity and distinctiveness of the concept und its application. There are numerous sayings, starting in the Old Testament and leading to later Scriptures, which define lifelong education as a process throughout life, in which each Jew actively studies and teaches the written core of the Jewish tradition (Kodesh, 1984). In Israel, this concept has not yet been crystallized in a way that is authentic to Israel. At the present time, the terms adult education and lifelong education, are interchangeable. Still, there are some signs of authenticity to the concept of lifelong education. The signs are manifested, first and foremost, in the Orthodox religious segment of the population. There is a flourishing of yeshivot (both Torah high scholls and post-high school) throughout the country. The yeshivot attract not only their natural clientele, that is, Orthodox religious youth, but also secular youth and young adults, many from English speaking countries, who flock to the yeshivot out of a desire to get intouch with their spiritual roots. In those yeshivot, lifelong education is visible. The students and the rabbis in many yeshivot are personally involved in the daily life of the State. Some serve in the Army and then return to the yeshiva; some join political parties in order to influence the running of the State. The content-areas are the Holy Scriptures and their Commentaries, with the addition of some modern subject-matter areas.

Another instance where lifelong education is manifested, is the case of the Community Centres (Matnasim). This, at present, 160-centres network, started in Israel in 1972. The concept of lifelong education was developed in terms of the comprehensive approach towards designated communities, that is, communities in distress. In the majority of matnasim, all age-groups are being served by a limited and cohesive core of workers. The concept of lifelong education was adopted from the beginning, using all available resources in order to study and teach (Zipori, 1984).

In our judgement, those two examples illustrate only two out of the several components of the concept Lifelong Education: the component „cross-generational pursuit of learning" (see item (a) in the previously discussed Working Framework); and the component of „using individual, familial, and communal resources in order to impart knowledge and to create learning environments for all" (see item (d) in the same discussion). The other components are still missing, that is: conceiving of childhood and adolescence as preparatory stages for adulthood; an interplay between the formal system and the non-formal system in education; the place of women; the role of the Holy Scriptures and rabbis in serving as „living models".

The lagging of conzeptualization behind practice has become a typical characteristic of lifelong education in Israel. Unlike other fields, where Israeli scientists have caught up with their North American and European colleagues, in the field of adult/lifelong education, there has been a gap between actual doing and theorizing.[6] That is, probably, why this field has not yet received the recognition of a Chair in higher learning institutions.[7]

The Text and the Teacher

The majority of Israeli society, the secular sector, has abandoned the common denominator of its existence – the Holy Scriptures. In doing so it has lost, in our understandig, the corner stone of liberal adult education, that is, study for its own sake. In other countries, liberal adult education is being carried out without exclusivity regarding a given content-area, or activity, or desired goals. In Jewish tradtion, study for its own sake was the study of Torah, Mishnah, Talmud, Commentaries, Collection of Legends etc. The meaning of „for its own sake" was twofold: (a) study not in order to become a paid teacher or rabbi, but rather study for one's own fulfillment and growth; (b) study for the preservation of this collected heritage, so that is can be passed from one generation to the next. The Israeli society, still deeply rooted in indigenous folklores and still fighting for its existence, has not replaced the Holy Scriptures with another Text.

A particularly dramatic example is the tremendous vacuum which exists in the lives of not only the generation who immigrated to Israel in the 50's and

[6] The tangible gap between theory and practice in adult education in Israel first found its expression shortly after the establishment of the State, when tremendous efforts were made to absorb the massive new immigration. The campaigns to – teach Hebrew, eradicate illiteracy, contribute to social absorption and communal integration – represented adult education in its most intensive form. Research and theorizing, on the other hand, came much later and in a fragmented manner. Two examples illustrate our argument that research in lifelong education in Israel has not contributed significantly to the clarification, explanation and analysis of practice, on one hand; and to the formulation of conceptual categories, on the other hand. One, the two volumes which were dedicated to the „State of the Art"; the 1972 Lifelong Education in Israel (English) and the 1984 Schachar's Book (Hebrew). Both volumes describe a multitude of programs in Israel, using the same conceptual framwork and terminology. Two, the anecdotal material emerging from discussions in the executive body of the Adult Education Association of Israel. This writer, a member of that Body since 1967, can attest to the remarkably similar lingo and conceptualization, used during the last 20 years in discussing Israel's lifelong education challenges and future directions.

[7] Interestingly enough, several distinguished professors of adult education in English speaking countries were invited to establish a Chair, and they declined the invitation; no Israeli was invited.

60's, but also among their offspring. An observation of both urban and rural communities in distress in Israel, shows that „distress" is associated with: ethnic groups from the East (the Near East as well as Eastern Europe), and culture confusion (Israeli, 1985). Individuals, families, and communities are in distress because they are unable to adequately solve the problems and alleviate the difficulties that they confront. They are certain that they do not command resources which could offset their present state of inadequacy. The lack of Holy Scriptures to guide them, enlighten them and support them, contributes to their sense of distress. Those immigrants, who turned increasingly to secularity, have not forgotten their spiritual roots; still, they feel that they cannot go back to the Holy Texts once having deserted them, in the modern State of Israel. Their children feel the absence of a spiritual guide and they are torn between the desire to „assimilate" in the mainstream society, and their craving for a firm basis and continuity in their heritage.

There is no one text, not even several, which can be regarded worthy of „study for its own sake". Not only that, there is no rabbi, or group of rabbis, that can serve as „model teachers" for the non-Orthodox Israeli.[8] Substitute-teachers, such as political leaders and intellectuals, preach their own particular „brand of religion" and do not gain common acceptance. This situation, typical of modern states, is horrendous to Israeli society at present. Among other things, it does not allow lifelong education to provide for national unity, let alone national identiy.

In addition, it makes the training of adult/lifelong educators a difficult job. While in the early years of the State, Martin Buber was able to propose and implement a training program for adult educators in Israel (Buber, 1950; Beit Midrash, 1951), in later years, this task became increasingly complex in its conception and implementation.[9] The basic dilemma is, then, to find a delicate balance between preservation and change; between the old, convergent Texts and the new, divergent trends of thinking and understandig.

One way to find this balance would be to nurture adult/lifelong educators who are versed in the old and the new, and have identified the common core for life in Israel today. These people could serve as charismatic leaders and should be equipped with knowledge, compassion, conviction and continuity.

[8] Even Orthodox rabbis are not unanimously accepted in the religious sector of Israel. A recent book (Unna, 1985) discusses the rifts between the National Religious Party, Ha'Poel Ha'Mizrachi, and Agudat Yisrael.

[9] The training of adult educators in Israel is presently under consideration. The Department of Adult Education at the Ministry of Education and Culture has been providing non-degree courses, with the exception of the Diploma of Adult Education, jointly sponsored by this department and the School of Education, University of Haifa. The Martin Buber Centre for Adult Education is preparing credit courses and degree courses for training. On the whole, the confusion over this issue is indicative of the previously mentioned lag between theory and practice.

The Limitations of Change

Israelis tend to combine the characteristic of being courageous and overconfident at the same time. In the rather short history of the State, several undertakings in the field of adult/lifelong education were made full-fledged. Early in the 50's and 60's, massive campaigns were carried out without passing through the carefully thoughtout and planned preparatory stage. For example, in the mid-60's, when there was a need for teachers to „combat illiteracy", hundreds of women-soldiers were assigned to teach illiterates, with rather meager and hasty training. In practice, the soldiers did a good job. However, the campaign lasted for only a few years. The Army withdrew due to lack of woman power and the hole operation dwindled down. The implications from this campaign were not seriously applied, that is, to properly train students in teacher-training institutions for this job and to offer them attractive jobs as teachers for the adult population. Another example was in the area of social absorption in moshavim (cooperative agricultural villages). The moshav became the way of life for thousands of immigrants who came from urban settings and who were not trained for and accustomed to this agricultural lifestyle. In the decade between the mid-50's and mid-60's, social work joined forces with adult education in order to facilitate the absorption of those settlers. The assignment was most difficult and the successes were few. Then, in the mid-60's, this joint work stopped and disappeared for the next 20 years.

Yet another example was the first phase of Project Renewal which started in 1975. The aim of the Project was to renew the physical environment of inner city neighborhoods. Throughout the country, some 160 neighborhoods were chosen and a highly centralized network was established to supervise the Project in action. It took a cycle of five years to realize that the physical renewal was not sufficient and that there was a need for the additional dimension of social renewal. At present, some 80 urban communities are involved in the second phase, and it seems that this phase makes up for the relatively few successes of the first phase.

These three examples share, in our estimation, the zealous desire to „attack problems" in a massive way. This brings us to the current most outstandig campaign in adult/ lifelong education in Israel – the Tehila Project.[10] In

[10] What is Tehila? „The idea of Tehila consists of a number of elements: – a welcoming pleasant and encouraging atmosphere for study; – grouping of students in an organized graduated framework divided into levels which are more or less homogeneous; – continuous and systematic studies over a period of several years; – a variety of curricula especially adapted for the adult student; – special teaching methods and aids; – continual training of teachers in workshops and in-service training sessions; – on-going evaluation of achievements and correction of faulty learning; cultural enrichment, and encouragement of creativity; – encouraging a democratic way of life and involvement in the community" (Toklatil, 1983, p. 31).

contrast to the previously discussed examples, Tehila seems to be a rather well-thought out Project and it has proved its success in nomerous adult learning centres. Still, several questions have been raised by the very same person who has been in charge of this Project since 1977. The questions are:

1) What are the limits of the ability of adults who are beginnes, or almost beginners, to develop their own cognitive abilities and learning skills?
2) How far are we permitted to go in exerting influences which will change the attitudes and behaviour of the students?
3) What damage, if any, is done to those who drop out half-way?
4) What really are the prospects for a Tehila graduate, after a number of years at the Centre, to find the inner strength to persevere with some type of study, reading and cultural enrichment, once having left the framework? (Tokatli, 1983, p. 32–33).

It is apparent from these questions that the limits to change depend not only on the learners' abilities and readiness to change, and not only on the ability and readiness of the adult educator to exert his influence over his adult learners. The other party is the institutional setting, i.e. the adult/lifelong education agencies which should play a vital role in facilitating the process of change. The Israeli experience, as we have tried to illustrate in this paper, showed ambivalent attitudes towards adult/lifelong education. On one hand, there was an enthusiasm to make a „quick job" in combatting illiteracy (in the 50's and 60's) and in re-orientating workers to new technologies (from the mid-70's onwards) (Hecht, 1984). On the other hand, the Israeli Establishment as a whole, did not provide adequate funds and continued support, on an on-going basis. In a Learning Society, where lifelong education consists of the six components specified in the Working Framework, the dropout Tehila student will either not drop out at all, or will find a way to teach whatever he has mastered to persons who are less knowledgeable than he is. Thus, he will continue learning through teaching and will derive reinforcement from his own students. In such a Learning Society, the teachers will be trained along the lines previously discussed. In this way they will serve not only in their intellectual capacity, but also in their charismatic forces and in their ability to balance between the old and the new. Tehila learners whose efforts in learning may be regarded as „last gambel on education" will have more opportunities, even at later stages of their life.

The third dilemma, in our judgement, which confronts lifelong education in Israel today, lies in the inability of the Establishment to conceive of this field in a positive and systematic way. As in other areas of life, the quick pace of change confusion and uncertainty. Consequently, the Establishment has difficulties in maintaining consistent social policies. In the case of lifelong

education, the responsibility rests on adult/lifelong educators in Israel to educate the decision-Makers themselves. Herzl, the visionary of the State, examplified the possibility of bringing a dream into reality, by combining the old and new. In the mid-80's, this combination is even more needed in Israel. The challenge, more than the solution, nourishes a sense of optimism. The greater the challenge, the greater is the impetus to meet it, and the hope to see it to its fruition.

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